DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 309 277 CE 052 910

TITLE LEA Management, Organisation and Support. Two-Year Youth Training Schemes. An Evaluation of LEA Modular Programmes.
INSTITUTION Further Education Unit, London (England).
REPORT NO ISBN-1-85338-130-6
PUB DATE May 89
NOTE 9p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

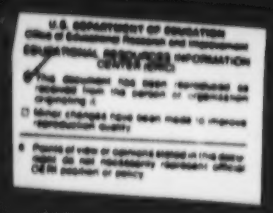
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Programs; *Cooperative Programs; Educational Needs; Foreign Countries; *Institutional Cooperation; *Job Training; Postsecondary Education; *Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; Staff Development; Two Year Colleges; *Youth Employment
IDENTIFIERS England; *Youth Training Scheme

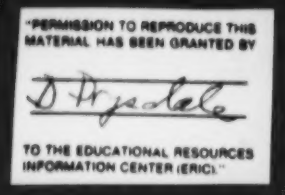
ABSTRACT

A collaborative project, called MainFrame, has been developed among local education authority (LEA)-managed Youth Training Schemes (YTS) in Bedfordshire, Haringey, and Sheffield, England, and joined by Liverpool LEA and the Wirral Metropolitan College. Such coordination of training programs can be beneficial for staff and trainees. Some of the benefits include the following: (1) LEAs are free from the normal constraints on colleges or employers; (2) LEAs are able to offer a testing ground for innovative work in prevocational and vocational education and training; (3) LEA YTS managing agents are able to respond quickly and on a large scale to the demands of YTS; (4) economies of scale result; (5) work placements can be organized centrally, eliminating duplication and ineffective use of resources; and (6) a consortium approach that permits the participation of smaller employers in YTS can be developed. Disadvantages include the complexities of the relationship with the colleges, with some colleges unwilling to support the activities, and the fact that the use of LEAs has meant the relationship of colleges with local employers has disappeared, causing some resentment. Another concern has been the need for staff development. An officer has been appointed to coordinate staff training within MainFrame and the commitment has been made; finding adequate resources to provide staff development, however, may be a concern. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

FURTHER EDUCATION UNIT





TWO-YEAR YOUTH TRAINING SCHEMES

An Evaluation of LEA Modular Programmes

ED309277

No. 7 May 1989 *ISBN 1 85338 130 6*

LEA MANAGEMENT, ORGANISATION AND SUPPORT

An evaluation of LEA-managed, modular, two-year Youth Training Schemes (YTS) is being carried out by FEU. This research project (RP394) focuses on a collaborative project between Bedfordshire, Haringey and Sheffield LEAs as they develop their training programmes within their localities. The project has been joined by Liverpool LEA and the Wirral Metropolitan College and is now known as MainFrame.This bulletin describes how LEA co-ordination of training programmes can be beneficial for staff and trainees.

LEA central organisation of YTS

Local Education Authorities (LEAs) have a key role to play in the management of education and training opportunities for young people. The aim of the collaboration project, MainFrame, is to develop common documentation and procedures for LEAs for modular credit accumulation in two-year YTS. However, the different histories of the three LEAs involved in the project have a legacy in the kinds of changes that have taken place in their organisational structures.

Bedfordshire

The original model of organisation was established by Bedfordshire* and demonstrated the LEA's preparedness to move quickly in response to the demands of YTS. This was considered part of Bedfordshire's FE service, but was free from the normal constraints on the work of colleges and LEAs. It offered a testbed for innovatory and good practice in prevocational and vocational education and training.

The key feature of this organisation is the central agency in which the Bedfordshire Youth Training Group is linked to the Education Department but is independent, as far as possible, of college influence, both structurally and in terms of location. Initial resources financed the appointment of a central agency management team and a team of liaison officers. The agency was established on two sites - one in Bedford for the north of the county and one in Luton for the south - with a central administrative system. At a time of a declining 16-19 cohort, there is a need for the Agency to become more competitive and attract funding from new sources. It has recently responded to Employment Training to accommodate adult training within its structure. The LEA has been successful in tendering for the sole Training Agent in the county, and also contracts with the Training Agency as a Training Manager.

Haringey

The London Borough of Haringey has a history of working with young unemployed people and schemes byin which unemployed school leavers could obtain jobs. When the Training Agency devised the Youth Opportunities Programme, the borough responded by taking up and expanding the initiative. Later, when the Youth

* *Converting Working into Learning*, FEU, 1985, and *Supporting YTS*, 3rd edn, 1985, Appendix VII.

CE052910

Training Scheme (YTS) was introduced, the borough council successfully bid to become a managing agent. The LEA recognised that this would provide them with the opportunity to seize the initiative in designing, developing and administering programmes of vocational preparation. This was an opportunity for the education service to establish a well-balanced and coherent programme and foster the notion of a partnership with the Training Agency.

When YTS was extended to two years in April 1986, Haringey saw this as a positive step but one that needed linking to genuine progression in terms of training and employment opportunity, in spite of the perceived inadequacy of the Training Agency's financial support for the new scheme.

Since two-year YTS required managing agents to gain Approved Training Organisation (ATO) status by April 1988, Haringey Education Service applied for this. The agency was formalised as the Haringey Education Service Training Agency (HESTA) in the autumn of 1986.

Because of the pressures, both self-imposed and external, for the provision of a quality scheme, Haringey had been looking at other LEAs' YTS provision. In December 1985, along with Sheffield, Haringey agreed to join Bedfordshire in its innovatory work as a collaborative development programme. Since July 1987, the borough has taken a leading role in the project by agreeing to accommodate the MainFrame office and offer support in establishing the post of the project officer and, subsequently, a staff development officer to work with MainFrame and the borough.

Since joining the collaborative project, management and organisational structures have had to be modified to facilitate the design and delivery of the modular programme. As in Bedfordshire, liaison officer posts have been created to administer guidance and reviews.

Sheffield

Sheffield's introduction to the collaborative project was an in-service training event held in October 1985. 'Two-Year YTS' was open to staff from Sheffield's five colleges of FE and those involved in the city's three YTS schemes (two community projects and a training workshop), run by the city council's Education Department. The event was addressed by staff from Bedfordshire LEA.

Two-year YTS was to be sharply focused on work-based skills and the workplace had to be used as the prime training resource. Staff had to be appointed to find and nurture the workplace, coach supervisors, negotiate appropriate training programmes and support trainees. Staff in colleges and schemes were, understandably, cool to the idea of colleagues from other organisations playing such an important role in dealing with YTS trainees. At this stage, the five colleges and three schemes were largely autonomous in the delivery of their YTS programmes, dealing directly with the local Training Agency office and employers.

However, a series of in-service events between January and March 1986 and other meetings arranged to consider management issues set the scene for Sheffield's commitment to the collaborative project. This was given formal LEA approval in April 1986. An embryonic central unit was established, comprising administrative staff supporting a temporary team of liaison officers culled from the colleges and schemes. The Education Department's YTS administration was now centralised and took the name Hallmark as a declaration of intent to be a quality scheme.

Advantages and disadvantages of centralisation

Although a number of differences reflect local traditions and decisions, the common features in the three authorities have been the co-ordination of YTS provision by a central unit and the creation of a tier of liaison officers, with supporting agency management. In two of the three LEAs, this involved taking away from local FE colleges the responsibility for managing YTS schemes. They were, instead, contracted to provide off-the-job training by the LEA central agency. In Sheffield, however, this was never attempted, and Hallmark as a central administrative unit remained supportive of and the co-ordinator for college-based YTS design and delivery.

The organisational strategy of centralisation has both advantages and disadvantages, which any LEA considering centralising its provision outside the college structure has to take on board.

Advantages

- LEAs are free from the normal constraints on colleges or employers.

- LEAs are able to offer a testbed for innovatory work in pre-vocational and vocational education and training.
- LEA YTS managing agents are able to respond quickly and on a large scale to the demands of YTS.
- They are able to introduce economies of scale that are necessary if agencies are to establish self-financing provision.
- Programmes offered can cover a wider range of abilities and occupational areas.
- Operating as umbrella YTS organisations, individual initiatives within the scheme can be encouraged.
- A balance between on- and off-the-job training can be offered within the scheme.
- A central administrative and record-keeping system can be established.
- Work placements can be organised centrally, reducing duplication and ineffective use of resources.
- The role of liaison officers can be used to integrate on- and off-the-job training more effectively than the use of college tutors.
- A consortia approach which permits the participation of smaller employers in YTS can be developed in ways that might otherwise not have been possible.

Disadvantages

The disadvantages of centralisation have been most evident in the case of Bedfordshire and Sheffield. As providers of the off-the-job training, the colleges have a crucial role to play in the general effectiveness of the agency's YTS provision, particularly the extent to which it can provide integrated programmes. The system requires individual commitment to be successful and will be undermined by resistance within the college. The key is to ensure that all staff involved are highly motivated, well resourced and given appropriate development opportunities to enable them to be effective. Motivation can also be enhanced by encouraging active participation in the curriculum project, for example by being involved in sector groups. However, in some instances college management has been unwilling to support the activities.

Apart from motivational and participation problems, the centralisation of YTS provision has not necessarily ensured the most effective use of resources. College tutors have established links with local employers over many years. The centralisation of the agency and the creation of a tier of liaison officers to work directly with local employers means that those with the most experience and expertise have not been called upon. LEA managing agencies are bureaucratic, with hierarchical structures and lines of accountability. They suffer from all the conventional disadvantages of red tape, structured communication channels and the need for meetings to make decisions. Liaison officers reported powerlessness to make decisions with respect to either on- or off-the-job training, and needing to report back to the organisation and await a decision 'from above'. This can make central agencies slow to respond to initiatives and the need to change.

A second issue is the relationship with colleges. In all three LEAs, local colleges had responded to varying degrees to early Training Agency schemes and a number of them had been acting as managing agencies. However, they are now being mainly contracted for the role of off-the-job training provider. Because the central agency acts as intermediary between on- and off-the-job training, the direct relationship between colleges and local employers has all but disappeared. This has caused some resentment, especially where college tutors had previously taken a leading role in establishing relationships with local employers as providers of work experience and work placements.

Bedfordshire

The four colleges in Bedfordshire have strong formal and informal links with the Bedfordshire Youth Training Group, primarily through the college co-ordinators. However, colleges respond to the LEA managing agency in much the same way as they would any other YTS managing agency. Indeed, FEU findings suggest that in some instances colleges were less responsive to the needs of the LEA managing agency. The problem of 'infilling' BYTG trainees into existing courses with other YTS trainees and sometimes non-YTS students appeared to be greater than in either of the other two LEAs. There was evidence of resentment in some colleges that their YTS functions had been reduced to providing off-the-job training by the creation of the central agency, especially where tutors thought that employers who had provided work experience for many years had been taken over by the agency. Relations between the agency and colleges appeared to be quite harmonious, and colleges seemed to have a good deal of autonomy.

Haringey

HESTA and the two colleges had a contractor-subcontractor relationship. The colleges were

subcontracted to provide off-the-job training for the central agency, within definite financial guidelines. They appeared to be more accountable to the agency than in the other two LEAs.

Sheffield

Each college, both before and after tertiary reorganisation, was considered an equal partner in Hallmark and was formally represented on the agency's management committee. But the college retained the responsibility for selecting trainees onto YTS, and therefore the concomitant activities of publicity and marketing. Administration passed on to the central agency which also took responsibility for co-ordinating work placements.

During the period of evaluation, Sheffield Hallmark has been attempting to consolidate itself as the central agency in a partnership with the colleges and schemes, at a time when the LEA was undergoing its tertiary re-organisation. This has had both direct and indirect effects on the central unit. One of the ex-Mode B schemes has been merged into one of the new FE colleges, and stronger links have been formed between the two remaining training workshops and colleges. Managers are allowed more discretion and responsibility now, but colleges are taking over some of the administrative functions. According to the agency co-ordinator, there is strong evidence that tertiary reorganisation is affecting the ways in which colleges are able to resource and participate in the development of Hallmark and its YTS programmes.

The proposal is that there should be a formal review of Hallmark's central unit, which will need to agree clear objectives and make recommendations of changes as appropriate. Almost certainly, this review will entail a reconsideration of the advantages and disadvantages of having a central YTS organisation, rather than relocating both the support team and administration resources in one or more of the new colleges.

The role of the liaison officer

In at least two of the three LEA agencies, the role of liaison officer has been crucial to the delivery of YTS. Bedfordshire was the first to appoint a group of liaison officers, followed by the other two LEAs, though the role was perceived somewhat differently in Sheffield. The three LEAs have appointed 50 liaison officers, of which about two-thirds are female.

The overall purpose of the post is to assist in devising the arrangements for employer-college-agency relations, and take a prime role in liaison for planned work experience. The main duties are to:

- maintain and foster good relations between employers, colleges and agencies;
- organise and support the recruitment of trainees;
- devise and implement support and guidance provision for trainees;
- monitor and assist the development of properly integrated training programmes;
- train and coach supervisors in the workplace;
- hold group training sessions with trainees on a regular basis;
- maintain and develop assessment and certification procedures;
- act as advisers to meetings of appropriate programme review groups;
- co-operate with other liaison officers to share and extend efficient and effective practices;
- undertake any other duties of a similar level and responsibility as may be required, from time to time.

It should be noted that, in Sheffield, the role of liaison officers differs from this - they are not, for example, responsible for organising recruitment, which remains one of the tasks of the college tutor; nor do they have group training sessions with trainees on a regular basis.

In the findings of the evaluation, this role is crucial to the successful implementation of MainFrame. The process of monitoring delivery and carrying out the review and assessment is very dependent on liaison officers who also have the task of identifying and providing for special education and training needs. Increasingly, liaison officers will have to engage in monitoring and evaluation, as well as marketing. However, their status does not reflect their responsibilities. In liaison with colleges, in particular, their role is hindered by their lack of status and feeling of little influence over off-the-job training staff. This is also felt within their own organisational structures which are part of a larger bureaucratic machine. The solution to this problem must be to accord more prestige to the role of the liaison officer. Only in one of the three LEAs might they be considered to be being paid 'the rate for the job', with a salary, job conditions and career structure paralleling that of college lecturers. To be compared with employment officers within the career service does not adequately reflect the range of responsibilities of liaison staff who have

to develop a range of skills from guidance and counselling to curriculum development.

New partners and the transferability of the model

The collaboration of the three original partners in MainFrame provides some insights into the advantages and problems of collaboration, as well as the organisation structures and enabling conditions necessary to support it. One of the objectives of the FEU evaluation was to monitor the transferability of the collaborative model to other LEAs. During the evaluation the collaborative project was joined by one further LEA - Liverpool - during 1987, and one large college of FE - Wirral Metropolitan College.

Liverpool LEA

The FE colleges in Liverpool LEA took a strong initiative on the YTS programme with little intervention from the LEA. This resulted in a rather uncoordinated response to YTS with different systems and practices developing in:

- administrative procedures;
- frequency and systems for workplace monitoring;
- widely differing periods of off-the-job training between colleges for identical programmes;
- growing competition between colleges in an increasingly competitive sector.

Re-organisation of the LEA's eight colleges into four, in 1986, had little impact on the operation of YTS programmes. Progression to FE beyond YTS was not assisted by colleges providing vocational programmes for which there were no supporting higher level programmes to allow continuity of training; the full ability range was not being catered for through YTS. The move to two-year YTS and the funding changes highlighted a number of these issues in a context which was increasingly conscious of the need to use resources more effectively.

Good practice had evolved in some centres, particularly in the monitoring of work experience with an emphasis on personal guidance and support for trainees, and excellent relationships between colleges and employers. Integration between on- and off-the-job training was facilitated, using college tutors for the monitoring of work experience. In this way, curriculum content, training plans and assessment procedures complemented the reality of work using the workplace as a resource to inform training. However, credit for trainees learning at work was reflected only through the YTS certificate and assessment of skills and knowledge acquired at work was not coherent, consistent and rigourous as it might have been. Further, despite college training reflecting the work being done by the trainee in the work placement, this was not credited in the nationally recognised certification used.

Thus, joining MainFrame had certain attractions, for it would enable the LEA to:

- ensure co-ordination across the institutions offering YTS;
- operate more efficiently and effectively;
- cater for the whole ability range;
- encourage progression to a range of higher level qualifications;
- develop a coherent assessment system for both on- and off-the-job training;
- address issues of equality of opportunity on a more coherent basis;
- provide coherence across programmes in the 14-18 age sector (TVEI, CPVE and 'mainstream' programmes);
- address the impending requirements of NVQs, industry lead bodies and preferred schemes;
- devise strategies to accommodate demographic trends.

MainFrame systems generally enhanced the delivery of YTS in Liverpool, partially through the opportunity to co-ordinate provision but also by confronting issues such as procedures for assessing and recording personal effectiveness in the workplace which had been addressed only in the vaguest terms. The module bank also provided an effective tool for developing and assessing integrated programmes.
Implementation has been co-ordinated through the YTS cross-sector group - established to inform Work-Related Non-Advanced Further Education (WRNAFE) planning of YTS across the city which consisted of representatives of the four colleges, the convener (later the MainFrame Development Officer), the Careers Service, the FE Adviser for Vocational Preparation, and the Training Agency. In addition to its WRNAFE role, the group assumed a wider co-ordinating role of LEA YTS provision, to:

- standardise administrative systems and procedures;
- monitor quality issues across programmes;
- monitor and maintain occupancy levels;
- plan staff development;
- plan and implement MainFrame;
- monitor, evaluate and moderate the use of

MainFrame systems;
- establish a Trainee Information System across the LEA's YTS schemes.

According to the LEA, the introduction of MainFrame has generated only positive outcomes in terms of links between YTS and other agencies. When it was operating effectively, MainFrame systems would be extended into other WRNAFE programmes. This process has already begun in Liverpool in a number of vocational sectors. Also, compatible systems are being devised for the Technical and Vocational Initiative (TVEI) and Compact. MainFrame will provide a modular credit transfer system coherent across the vocational education/training system in Liverpool. In summary, the quality of YTS programmes has substantially improved and this is partly reflected in consistently higher occupancy levels than previously achieved. This, however, has been due in part to the structural changes implemented as part of the process of introducing MainFrame. It is hoped that liaison officers will be appointed in the near future and Liverpool will ensure that this does not dilute the level of integration and coherence currently evident. The induction and staff development of liaison officers is the next major task to be undertaken.

Wirral Metropolitan College

Wirral Metropolitan College was one of the first in the north west to achieve ATO status without being referred to a second review of training arrangements. The college made the approach to join MainFrame as:

- Wirral has close links with Liverpool LEA and its colleges. To enable a structured and coherent approach, Wirral needed to respond to MainFrame as a result of Liverpool's involvement. This means that trainees and employers who use MainFrame modular programmes in both Liverpool and Wirral colleges can effectively transfer from one programme to another.
- The new principal of Wirral Metropolitan College came from Bedfordshire LEA and was instrumental in establishing MainFrame as a local collaborative project.

The YTS scheme has completely changed over to the MainFrame system and is actively involved in MainFrame sector group meetings, and so on. The college's mainstream departments are gradually becoming conversant with MainFrame, but difficulties still exist in the staff development area. Mainstream departments have difficulty in coming to terms with MainFrame as a system of credit accumulation as they are already using NVQ and examination board systems.

The MainFrame approach enables records to be kept accurately within the training inventory. The curriculum has broadened within Wirral's scheme and allows selected modules to be negotiated with trainees to meet their needs. Staff have, as a result of this, broadened their horizons.

Although MainFrame is still in its infancy at Wirral Metropolitan College, it has been totally embedded within the YTS.

In summary, as a new partner to MainFrame, the following conclusions have been drawn:

- The system is working well in the context of YTS, but mainstream college staff do not see why it should be used in college departments when other systems accepted by examination boards and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) already exist.
- The system relies on the goodwill of staff, that is, attending meetings and so on. It needs to be embedded in the LEA for positive commitment across all provisions.
- The potential of MainFrame needs to be explored quickly to enable it to be recognised nationally before other systems appear.
- As a vehicle for credit accumulation within YTS, CPVE and for monitoring progress, the system is working well.

The transferability of MainFrame is being tested in other ways. For example, its flexibility has been tested by the training needs of industry and commerce. Through its capacity, flexibility and distinct methodology, MainFrame has been engaged in developing customised training packages for a range of industries and businesses. Moreover, the attempt is being made to embed the modular credit system into work-related FE, bridging the vocational/academic divide.

FEU commentary

The organisational requirements for the effective design and delivery of a MainFrame-based YTS have been discussed earlier. This has focused on the need for a central organising and administrative unit, the role of the liaison officer,

and the transferability of the MainFrame model to other LEAs. It has been observed that Haringey, Sheffield and, more recently, Liverpool LEAs have adopted or adapted the Bedfordshire model with varying degrees of success. The case of Wirral Metropolitan College has illustrated how the model may be transferred to YTS managing agents other than LEAs.

The evaluation suggests that the model is transferable, providing the enabling conditions are met. It is clear that MainFrame has implications beyond YTS, and the first of the enabling conditions - links with a range of post-16 developments - is becoming increasingly significant. New partners in the project will need to be aware that they are not merely buying into a ready-made YTS delivery and assessment system. MainFrame is becoming a vehicle for curriculum development in the whole range of WRNAFE and other initiatives in education and training at post-16. New partners will need to be willing to engage in and contribute to those broader curriculum developments.

Staff development

Throughout the FEU evaluation of the MainFrame project, a consistent focus has been on the need for staff development and training. FEU has extensively supported the notion of staff development and has previously seen it as a strategy for ensuring quality in the delivery of YTS and the meeting of NCVQ requirements. FEU has also given advice on planning and management of staff development. This guide offers support to those, particularly in LEAs, responsible for the provision of staff development and in-service training for those involved in post-14 education, taking account of new funding arrangements outlined in DES Circular 6/86: *Local Education Authority Training Grants*. Many opportunities arose for LEAs to collaborate with other institutions, LEAs, and local and national agencies in the development, delivery and evaluation of their staff development programmes. Indeed, circular 6/86 made collaboration a requirement in the interests of both efficiency and effectiveness. For collaboration to be effective, attention has to be paid to:

- the identification of common concerns susceptible to exploration on a collaborative basis;
- liaison arrangements;
- the recognition within collaborative arrangements of individual LEA needs and circumstances;
- the standardisation of administrative mechanisms;
- opportunities for collaboration inherent in all elements of the staff development process.

The FEU publication gives advice on how to build on collaboration to make it effective in the design and delivery, as well as evaluation, of staff development. A key management role in this process is the identification and analysis of need.

There is a consistent need for staff development, particularly for college and scheme staff and workplace supervisors. While this is not a serious shortcoming, given the relatively high level of commitment to and provision of staff development within MainFrame, data collected from virtually all the programme elements, and in particular from tutors, suggest a widely varying and sometimes inconsistent, interpretation of the content and delivery of staff development. It was not so much a question of quantity of opportunities, but their management and the capacity of staff to be able to respond to them.

The MainFrame Management Committee has responded to these findings. During the second year of the evaluation, the awareness of MainFrame has been significantly enhanced and further staff development undertaken. This has been achieved in several ways, particularly through the use of Grant-Related In-Service Training (GRIST) Funding and ATCs.

Staff development has been recognised as being of paramount importance. One of the partners - Haringey - has agreed to the half-time secondment of a member of its liaison officer staff at Senior Lecturer grade, initially for one year, to assist in the development and implementation of effective staff training programmes for MainFrame. The postholder is expected to identify staff development needs for those working in Haringey Education Service Training Agency and in MainFrame. The duties include:

- liaison with staff in MainFrame partners to agree roles for which training programmes are required;
- co-ordination of sessions for staff within the project to analyse job role content;
- collation and synthesis of the results of sessions in different partners' institutions;
- checking the outcomes of this work for validity and relevance;
- undertaking other consultation exercises to identify staff development needs;
- devising competence-based programmes for staff training.

FEU commentary

The FEU evaluation identified a major commitment toward staff development among MainFrame partners. However, the management of this staff development required further development. Although the second round of surveys indicated some progress since the first year of the evaluation, some of the problems identified in the interim findings continued to exist and were in need of attention.

These findings had been fed back to the MainFrame partners and immediate action taken on the initiative of Haringey. The establishment of a postholder to co-ordinate staff development activities both within its own agency and across the project should pay dividends. It is too early to evaluate the effect of this action, but what is clear is that MainFrame, in seeking to provide quality YTS, had undertaken a major initiative to improve staff development and make its delivery more effective.

The resourcing of staff development, however, may be a future problem. There was evidence to suggest GRIST may no longer be available to LEA YTS activities. In Bedfordshire, for example, managing agency staff have made a major contribution to the LEA's staff development programme under GRIST by providing materials, inputs and support on issues relating to:

- Developments in YTS and Employment Training;
- equal opportunities;
- NCVQ;
- assessment of prior learning;
- modularisation.

The irony is that agency staff fall outside LEATGS regulations and their training needs have to be facilitated through in-house induction and staff training programmes or events organised by MainFrame. Its commitment to Employment Training, however, as both the sole Training Agent for the county and a training manager, should ensure a continued development of staff training through its local ATC.

The advent of NCVQ has also provided opportunities and responsibilities for staff development. The emphasis on competence as the outcome of vocational education and training needs to be constructively carried through in staff training/development schemes. The model of accredited, competence-based, modular training, as developed by the MainFrame staff development working group, is entirely appropriate as an endorsement of the process and outcomes of vocational training, and reinforces the initiatives already under way in the FE system. It is important that staff development is experiential. It should also be fundable as a priority in the LEA Training Grants Scheme. However, proposals based on the 'cascade' approach should be carefully examined. The FEU evaluation of MainFrame has demonstrated the potential inconsistencies that can arise through this approach; it is not the only or the best means of delivering staff training. The major requirement is for expert organisers of in-service training to provide a framework within which others can share their experience. Within the MainFrame collaboration, there is sufficient expertise to be able to organise effective in-service training in a way that is distinct from that for a particular in-service training requirement. MainFrame have been moving in the right direction to ensure that its staff training and development is effective in both design and delivery.

Information

This bulletin is the seventh in a series which provides information about the development of the collaborative project and its evaluation. For details of how to obtain these bulletins and other FEU documents, please contact the FEU Information Centre, telephone 01-321 0433 ext. 256.

Information about the FEU evaluation of two-year YTS in the three LEAs and other FEU work in relation to YTS may be obtained from Stuart McCoy, FEU, Room 1/7, 2 Orange Street, London WC2H 7WE (ext. 271).

FEU has recently published *Supporting Quality in YTS* which provides advice for scheme managers and curriculum planners involved in implementing YTS. A limited number of free copies are available from the FEU Information Office.

Information about recent developments in the MainFrame project may be obtained from Geoff Carroll, Programme Development Officer, MainFrame, Unit 5, St George's Industrial Estate, White Hart Lane, Wood Green, London N22 6QL.